00167

1955/03/29

[redacted]

29 March 1955

MEMORANDUM

TO : [redacted] 1.5(a)(d) C

FROM : [redacted]

SUBJECT: Recent Information concerning Binh Xuyen OB, Plans and Strengths

The following information was received [redacted]

1. The Binh Xuyen forces have mined all of their military posts and establishments, including those in and around Saigon, for the express purpose of detonating them if forced to fight Government forces and withdraw from the Saigon/Cholon area.

2. As of Sunday, 27 March, the BX have been ordered by General Le Van VIEN to defensive action - with instructions to fight only if attacked. If attacked, the BX forces will be informed by starting the explosions in their posts. At this signal the BX will assault, as per plan, (1) all Vietnamese Government military posts, and (2) prevent by force all circulation in Saigon/Cholon. When forced to retreat (BX realize cannot beat VN Army) will go into region between Cap St. Jacques and Saigon (i.e., east of Saigon River and south of Saigon). This area is swampy, criss-crossed arroyos, brush, and forests - almost impossible to penetrate for military offensive operations. BX intend to continue here indefinitely a guerrilla war against the Government, cut Saigon river, and fight to finish if necessary.

3. BX Regiment #2 (beret vert), commanded by Lt. Colonel le Paul, has two of its three battalions at full strength (approximately 450 men per bn). BX Regiment #1, commanded by Colonel Thai Hoang Minh, has five bns, these five bns at one company strength (approximately 150), near Saigon/Cholon but able to draw on troops and reservists in posts south of Saigon/Cholon on short order to bring forces to full strength (approximately 450 men per bn).

[redacted] Comment: [redacted] estimates effective BX forces at 4,500 men plus a possible 3,000 Reservists who can be called up from BX villages. From the above information, however, it is apparent actual effectives (excluding Regiment #3, which assigned to protect Catholic refugees, and Third Bn of Regiment #2 in Dalat, number closer to 2,000, with approximately 1,600 Reservists on short call. [redacted] 1.5(a)(d) C

Attachments:
1. Chart indicating Organizational Structure BX forces
2. Map showing locations of BX forces in Vietnam

[redacted]

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